



Minutes of the Barrington Hills Village

Communications Committee Meeting

April 13, 2009

5:30 p.m.

Training Room

VILLAGE HALL

112 Algonquin Road

Final

1. Call to Order

Chairman Nikki Panos called the meeting to order on April 13, 2009 at 5:35 p.m. in the Barrington Hills Village Hall.

Roll Call

Present

Nikki Panos, Chairperson

Barbara Kemp, Vice Chair (arrived at 5:41 p.m.)

Pamela Cools, Recording Secretary

Maureen Prettyman (departed at 6:16 p.m.)

Linda Fox

Laura Ekstrom

Robert Kosin, Village Administrator

Sarah Kenney, Planning & Zoning Coordinator

Absent

Beth Mallen, Trustee

Lt. Joe Colditz, Police Department

2. Reports from the Village

Sarah Kenney

- The restriction on overweight trucks (over 10 tons) was posted on village roads on March 16th. The weight limit is instituted annually in late winter/early spring to minimize damage to roadways due to freeze-thaw cycles. Typically, the restriction is lifted in early May by the Village Engineer.

- 2009-2010 vehicle stickers are on sale in the Police Department and must be displayed by June 1st to avoid penalties. This year's stickers feature the IYA logo; the mounted rider logo will return next year.
- IYA star parties were held on the grounds of the Village Hall on April 3rd and 4th. Area astronomers assisted residents in viewing the night skies through telescopes. Laura Ekstrom suggested that the village issue press releases to local newspapers about the recent IYA events.
- Sarah Kenney was interviewed on WGN AM radio in conjunction with the village's Dark Sky initiative and observance of Earth Hour.
- Arbor Day activities for children are planned April 25th at the Crabtree Nature Center.
- Jennifer Bulandr has been contacted to do a feature about our committee for the Barrington Courier-Review.

Robert Kosin

- Information was distributed concerning the McHenry County Land Conservancy program selling rain barrels and tumbling composters.
- Mr. Kosin suggested reminders in the newsletter and on the website about proper burning of landscape waste.

3. Approval of Minutes

Approved February 2, 2009 minutes as submitted. Motion by Laura Ekstrom, and seconded by Barbara Kemp.
Approved 5-0-0.

3. Newsletter

- The deadline for the next issue of the newsletter is May 15th, with June 1st as the projected delivery date to residents.
- Linda Fox suggested that perhaps we should consider publishing more issues yearly, with each issue being shorter to increase the effectiveness of our communication.

4. Website

- The Committee discussed the confusing and conflicting roles of the two village websites -- *.gov* and *.info*. Linda expressed continuing frustration at the lack of a clear delineation of the purposes of each site, and repetition of certain content on both sites. Despite numerous efforts during the past year by the Committee to publicize *vbhcomm.info* (lapdrop insert and repetitive references to the website in the newsletter, posters at the Village Hall and at the library, and display of an advertising banner in front of the Village Hall), most residents still seem to be unaware of the valuable community information available on *.info*. The consensus of opinion was that the committee needs to reassess the need for two websites, and that perhaps the Board of Trustees should be asked for their input and guidance on this issue.

- Members agreed that there is a need to create more prominent links on the **.gov** site to direct residents to **.info**. In addition, the Committee again questioned if it would be possible to establish e-mail communication directly to residents, including delivery of newsletters, and e-mail notifications of new postings on the website. Pamela suggested that we are not effectively utilizing electronic means of communication, and e-mail would significantly decrease postage and printing costs. Mr. Kosin insisted that e-mail addresses collected by the village would likely be susceptible to a FOIA request and would compromise resident privacy. Members questioned why postal addresses would not likewise be vulnerable to FOIA requests. Laura wondered if it would be possible to find a third-party company (similar to the NTI Group which operates the CTY emergency notification system) to assist with this.
- Members commented again on the relatively low ranking of **.info** in Google and other search engines. Barbara agreed to contact Tim Evans for advice in improving the website's position.
- Laura reported on the topics which the members felt should be included in the "New to the Hills" new resident packet and website tab. The consensus was to combine "marketing" of the unique Barrington Hills lifestyle along with text focusing on equestrian, conservation and rural aspects of the village. Laura presented a mock-up of a four-page PDF brochure with many of her own beautiful photographs. Linda was assigned the task of working on text and content for the brochure.
- Welcome Tab content was discussed, and any new content added to it should mainly be in the form of internet links, and not static tab items.
- Nikki presented a prototype of Comm Comm business cards designed by the village engineer. Members rejected that design in favor of using a layout consistent with the committee's website advertising posters. Nikki will relay our recommendations to the administration.
- Mr. Kosin reminded the committee that we need to encourage resident participation in the April 2010 Census.

5. Adjournment

Given there was no new business, Nikki Panos entertained a motion for dismissal at 8:10 p.m. **The next meeting is on Monday, May 4, 2009.** Motion to adjourn made by Barbara Kemp and seconded by Laura Ekstrom.
Approved 5-0-0.

Meeting Adjourned

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela A. Cools
Recording Secretary